

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-9 and 21 are currently pending in this application. Claims 10-20 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claim 21 has been newly added herewith.

**Allowable Subject Matter**

The Examiner indicates that claims 1-9 include allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the objections of the Office Action. Applicant has amended the claims in a manner believed to overcome the claim objections. Accordingly, Applicant submits that the application is in condition for allowance.

**Claim Objections**

With regard to the objections to lines 11 and 12 of claim 1, Applicant has amended claim 1 in the manner suggested by the Examiner. With regard to the Examiner's objection to line 6 of claim 1, Applicant notes that the Examiner provides no basis for the objection. Nonetheless, in order to advance prosecution, Applicant has amended line 6 of claim 1 by removing the phrase objected to by the Examiner. Because the phrase objected to by the Examiner has been removed, Applicant believes that the objection is overcome.

Applicant's representative discussed the objection to line 6 of claim 1 in a telephone conference on February 7, 2006. At that time, the Examiner appeared to assert that there was a lack of support for the flanges projecting transversally inwards. Initially, claim 1 currently

recites flanges projected transversally from the semi-cylindrical halves. This recitation is clearly supported and proper. Particularly, the recitation is clearly supported by any transversally projecting flanges disclosed in the specification.

Additionally, the present specification discloses both transversally inwards and outwards projecting flanges. For example, the abstract and lines 6-19 on page 3 of the specification clearly disclose semi-cylindrical halves having flanges projected transversally inwards or outwards. Transversally outwards flanges are further disclosed in the figures as well as at other places in the specification, including page 4, lines 29-30. Accordingly, transversally projected flanges are clearly supported numerous times in the originally filed application.

Furthermore, claims are not limited to the particular embodiments of the specification and a claim may be broader than the specific embodiment disclosed in a specification. *In re Rasmussen*, 650 F.2d 1212, 1214, 211 USPQ 323, 326 (CCPA 1981). Also, Applicant is not required to disclose every embodiment of his invention. *Ethicon Endo-Surgery, Inc. v. U.S. Surgical Corp.*, 93 F.3d 1572, 1582 (Fed. Cir. 1996). ("it is fairly well established that a patent owner may assert claims which go beyond the specific embodiment shown in his application.") Accordingly, it is clear that Applicant is not limited to claim recitations that are identical to the specific embodiments of the specification. In view of the above, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 is proper and request that the Examiner withdraw the objection to claim 1.

**New Claim**

Claim 21 has been newly added and depends from claim 1. Because the Examiner indicates that claim 1 is allowable, Applicant submits that claim 21 is also allowable at least because of its dependency. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the all of the pending claims are allowable and that the application is in condition for immediate allowance.

**Conclusion**

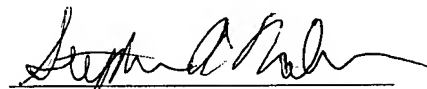
In view of the preceding amendments and remarks, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby earnestly solicited. If any points remain in issue that the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.116  
U.S. Appln. No. 10/777,228

Art Unit 3654  
Atty. Docket No. Q79063

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees (except the Issue/Publication Fees) to our Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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